Reviewer's report

Title: What is the impact of a national postgraduate medical specialist reform on the daily clinical training? A survey.

Version: 1 Date: 1 March 2010

Reviewer: Kai Philipp P Schnabel

Reviewer's report:

Congratulations to your large survey among all hospitals in North Denmark.

Discretionary Revisions:
1. Be a bit more specific about the pilot (methods, results)
2. Page 9, line 1: ...were rather low (<5)... better: ...were rather low (median = 3)...

Minor Essential Revisions:
1. Page 8: line 23: "significant increase in preparations of individual learning plans" (Table 2, both 7(2-9), p< 0.001 (under the assumption there are no mistakes in the numbers, it looks on the first view pretty much the same)). The difference may be significant (with this large numbers of respondents (2003: 2095, 2007: 1788) very small differences appear as significant different), but not very relevant. This can't be read by the reader out of the presented results.

One option: present the numbers in another way. E.g. frequency distribution were the difference is visable. Or calculate the mean (just for making the difference visible, 9-point lickert scales are quasi analog) and comment it.

Suggestion for the text: use the formulation "slight but significant increase".

For a power analysis in advance, what difference would have been defined as the SMD (smallest meaningful difference) for calculating the number of needed questionnaires? What would have been the result for the needed sample size? Less than the numbers of the survey for sure. In this case no significant difference would have been found. (Please do not hesitate contacting me if I could not make this point clear enough).

2. The same for the other two significant differences.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.
Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.